

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MAPUTO 00062 140733Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 EB-08 COME-00 /031 W
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R 140620Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6607
INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

C O N F I D E N T I A L MAPUTO 0062

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: BTRA, MZ, RH
SUBJECT: VISIT OF UNION CARBIDE EXECUTIVES TO SOUTHERN AFRICA

REF: STATE 001918

1. AS DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, DURING PAST FEW MONTHS EMBASSY HAS HAD NUMEROUS DISCUSSIONS WITH PRESIDENT MACHEL AND SENIOR GPRM OFFICIALS REGARDING US INVESTMENT IN MOZAMBIQUE. IN COURSE THESE DISCUSSIONS, MACHEL HAS INDICATED THAT HE WISHES US INVESTMENT QUERIES HANDLED (INITIALLY AT ANY RATE) BY MINISTER OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY MACHUNGO. WE HAVE FOLLOWED THIS PRACTICE WITH ALL U.S. COMPANIES. WE DO NOT BELIEVE WE SHOULD MAKE EXCEPTION FOR UNION CARBIDE.

2. MACHEL AND HIS MINISTERS ARE WELL AWARE OF EXTENSIVE INTERESTS OF UNION CARBIDE IN RHODESIA AND SOUTH AFRICA AND TAKE THE POSITION THAT IT IS IN LARGE PART BECAUSE OF THESE AND OTHER FOREIGN INVESTMENTS THAT SMITH HAS BEEN ABLE TO REMAIN IN POWER. IN VIEW THIS ATTITUDE, WE THINK IT TIMELY THAT SENIOR UNION CARBIDE OFFICIALS ARE COMING TO SOUTHERN AFRICA TO DIS-
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PAGE 02 MAPUTO 00062 140733Z

CUSS TH OUTLOOK FOR THEIR OPERATIONS. A DISCUSSION WITH MACHEL ON THIS SUBJECT -- IF SUCH A MEETING CAN BE ARRANGED -- WOULD OBVIOUSLY BE USEFUL TO UNION CARBIDE.

3. HOWEVER, WE DO NOT BELIEVE THE EMBASSY SHOULD SEEK TO SET UP THE APPOINTMENT WITH MACHEL. NOT ONLY WOULD WE BE REQUESTING SPECIAL TREATMENT FOR UNION CARBIDE, WHICH WE HAVE NOT OFFERED

TO OTHER U.S. FIRMS, BUT ANY USG IDENTIFICATION AT THIS TIME WITH UNION CARBIDE (OR OTHER FIRMS WITH INTERESTS IN RHODESIA) WILL BE SEIZED UPON BY OUR IDEOLOGICAL CRITICS IN THE MOZAMBIQUE GOVERNMENT TO QUESTION ANEW OUR MOTIVES IN SEEKING A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT IN RHODESIA. WE DO NOT WISH TO EXAGGERATE THE RISK TO NEGOTIATIONS, BUT THE NOTION THAT THE USG MAY BE INTERESTED IN A SETTLEMENT IN RHODESIA ONLY TO PROTECT U.S. ECONOMIC INTERESTS IS WIDELY HELD HERE, AND WE DO NOT WISH TO LEND CREDENCE TO THIS VIEW AT THIS TIME.

4. THE EMBASSY WILL BE HAPPY TO SET UP AN APPOINTMENT WITH MACHUNGO SHOULD UNION CARBIDE OFFICIALS DESIRE. IF UNION CARBIDE EVIDENCES INTEREST IN INVESTMENT IN MOZAMBIQUE, THERE IS A CHANCE MACHUNGO MIGHT SUGGEST THAT THE OFFICIALS MEET WITH MACHEL. IT WOULD ALSO NOT BE INAPPROPRIATE FOR UNION CARBIDE TO CABLE DIRECTLY TO MACHUNGO REQUESTING A MEETING WITH MACHEL, BUT WE THINK THE CHANCES OF OBTAINING AN APPOINTMENT ARE BETTER IF UNION CARBIDE OFFICIALS WAIT UNTIL THE TEAM IS HERE BEFORE REQUESTING THE MEETING.

5. WE HAVE NO OBJECTION TO SOUNDING MUGABE OUT ABOUT A POSSIBLE MEETING. AMBASSADOR DE PREE WILL ALSO BE PLEASED TO MEET WITH THE UNION CARBIDE OFFICIALS.
DE PREE

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